EXHIBIT 27 DATE 3/26/09 SB 406 & 46

## Dear Chair and Committee Members:

While recognizing that the ethical issues involved in these two bills are difficult, and divisive, I am making some comments that might provide food for thought. I will attempt to illustrate that while agreement by all parties regarding these issues is not realistic, I hope that people who are representing the public interest will attempt to keep open minds, and to consider other's points of view.

It is very confusing to me that some people who are opposed to birth control and/or abortion, sometimes also seem to be opposed to educating young people regarding ways to prevent unwanted pregnancy. Providing birth control methods and factual information, seems preferable to allowing unwanted children to be born. The argument that there are many people waiting to adopt children fails to address the issue that people would still be allowed adoption as a choice. No one should be forced to have an abortion or to practice birth control, but on the other hand, no one should be forced to have an unwanted child, or to live in fear of pregnancy, if that is not their choice.

No one is advocating abortion as the optimal method of birth control. If someone has made a mistake, how will "paying for their mistake" benefit the child that results? This is a concept I cannot understand. As a social worker, and chemical dependency counselor, I have spent the past ten years working with abused and unwanted children. They are the ones who pay the price. We aren't all born into a family like the Walton's. In a perfect world, these issues would not be a problem, but our world is not perfect. Carrying a child to term, and then giving it away, appears far more horrible to me personally, than having an abortion. That's my opinion. I neither believe or expect everyone to agree. The problem I have with this difficult issue is that, in a free country, one group should not have the right to impose their beliefs on others who see the ethics in a different way, or are in situations that those that desire to impose their will on others could never imagine.

I am not attempting to change anyone's mind regarding this very emotional issue, only to point out that people from completely different ways of thinking can believe sincerely that their values are worthy of respect and consideration.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely, Rachel Lopez, Missoula, MT